

II. REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 10-23, 25, 27, 30-32, and 36-38 are pending. The Applicants' attorney has amended claims 1, 12, 21-23, 25, 27, 30, 32, and 36-37, has cancelled claims 9, 24, 26, 28-29, and 33-35 without prejudice or disclaimer, and has added new claim 38. In light of the following, all of the claims as amended are now in condition for allowance, and, therefore, the Applicants' attorney requests the Examiner to withdraw all of the outstanding rejections. But if after considering this response the Examiner does not allow all the claims, the Applicant's attorney requests that the Examiner contact him to schedule a teleconference to further the prosecution of the application.

Rejection of Claims 1-15, 21-35, and 37 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) As Being Anticipated By U.S. Patent 5,852,583 to Taito et al.

Remarks for claims 1-15 and 21 will follow in a supplemental amendment.

Regarding claims 21-35 and 37, Taito does not disclose the storage of a flag that allows a predetermined operation to be performed to a memory cell within a respective group of multiple memory rows. Taito's latches L0 and L1 (FIG. 1) each store respective data, *i.e.*, a flag, that allows a predetermined operation to be performed to memory cells coupled to only a single word line, *i.e.*, a single row, not memory cells within a group of multiple rows.

Rejection of Claims 16-20, 22-23, 27-33, and 36-37 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) As Being Anticipated By U.S. Patent 6,222,779 to Saito et al.

Claims 16-20 are patentable by virtue of their indirect dependencies on claim 12 as amended.

Regarding claims 22-23, 27-33, and 36-37, Saito does not disclose loading a flag into a storage circuit associated with a group of memory rows without writing data to memory cells within the group. Referring, *e.g.*, to FIG. 18 and column 5, lines 23-28, Saito stores an erase flag in the flag circuit 306 only when data is written to the memory cells within a memory block associated with the flag circuit.

Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, claims 2-8, 10-11, 13-20, and 31 as previously pending, claims 1, 12, 21-23, 25, 27, 30, 32, and 36-37 as amended, and new claim 38 are in condition for full allowance, which is respectfully requested.

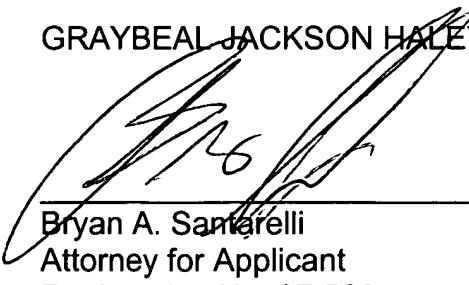
In the event additional fees are due as a result of this amendment, payment for those fees has been enclosed in the form of a check. Should further payment be required to cover such fees you are hereby authorized to charge such payment to Deposit Account No. 07-1897.

If the Examiner believes that a phone interview would be helpful, he is respectfully requested to contact the Applicant's attorney, Bryan Santarelli, at (425) 455-5575.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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